

Answering the call Civilian volunteers for duty in Iraq

Photos and story by
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Editor's Note: This article is the first in a series of stories covering Ms. Moore's deployment to Iraq.

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, ILL. —

Ms. Judy Moore served her nation in the Army for 21 years. Though she may no longer wear Army green, this retired sergeant major is not finished answering her country's call.

"I've spent my lifetime responding when needed," said Ms. Moore, who is an information technology specialist at the Air Force Communications Agency.

That's why when a short notice tasking from the Office of the Secretary of Defense asked for a civilian volunteer to work with the Coalition Provisional Authority in downtown Baghdad for at least six months, she applied.

As a civilian IT specialist, Ms. Moore evaluates computer network systems for their networkiness, interoperability with other systems and

their sustainability for the future. These same skills, as well as others she possesses, are needed by the OSD to fill a slot in Iraq.

"My children thought those days were over," she said.

There is a spark in her eyes and a confident tone in her voice as she speaks. She's very excited about going, but she also has some apprehensions about going to a city still often rocked by explosions. Only part of that has to do with not knowing exactly what she will be doing in her job. With her technical background, Ms. Moore puts her feelings into percentages — 80 percent excited, 20 percent apprehensive.

While sitting in an office waiting for her passport information to be processed, she watched news reports about another attack on U.S. troops.

"The news takes on a whole new intensity now. I'm aware of the differences and sensitivities there. I don't want to misrepresent us," she said.

As she prepares to deploy, there is a familiarity for her: Law of Armed

Conflict, anti-terrorism and chemical warfare training is not new to her, but it is new or, at least, less frequent for civilians.

Deployment specialists, who are experts at deploying active-duty people, are inventing the process as she gets ready. What to bring with her and what to wear takes on a new meaning.

Ms. Moore has three grown children. The youngest, a daughter, seems the most worried. But all of her family has been extremely supportive.

Ms. Moore's oldest is a son who serves as an Army reservist. Mother and son were both on active duty during Desert Storm.

"The closest I came to Iraq when I was on active duty was when I was based in Turkey, but my son was with the 24th Infantry Division as they pushed toward the outskirts of Baghdad in 1991. He is a little jealous that I'm the one going there," she said. With an expression of confidence, she added, "Looks like I'll be going for both of us."



Top: Ms. Judy Moore undergoes mask fit testing prior to her deployment. Right: Ms. Moore, an information technology specialist, will be working with coalition forces in Iraq.

